

REMARKS

In the action of May 2, 2003, the examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 3 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by GB811,195; rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by Ward et al; rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by O'Brien; rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as anticipated by Taylor; rejected claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Taylor; rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Cansler; and rejected claims 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over Kweon in view of GB811,195.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to more particularly point out his invention, including specifically the diameter of the first, second and third portions, as well as the length of the first and second portions. Amended claim 1 thus avoids all of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102.

With respect to the remaining rejections, applicant's claimed invention is different than Taylor, Cansler and the combination of Kweon and GB811,195 because of the specific diameters of the three portions and the specific lengths of the top and middle portions. Those specific limitations are significant and are not obvious or a choice of design because of the specific advantages achieved through the claimed arrangement. The claimed bristle is first configured in diameter and length so that the top portion can fit conveniently between the teeth. In addition, however, the overall bristle is configured to provide sufficient support for the bristles (the bristles must be sufficiently stiff to produce a surface cleaning effect).

For instance, the middle portion is sufficiently stiff, due to both diameter and length, to adequately support the first (top) bristle portion, while the lower bristle portion, due to its diameter and its length (the remaining length of the bristle), provides adequate stiffness and support for the entire bristle. This is not just a matter of design choice, since there exists a rather complex interaction between the configurations of the respective portions of the bristle in order to give the desired capability of the top portion fitting in between the teeth, yet stiff enough in both the top section and overall to provide the desired cleaning action, both between the teeth and the exposed surface of the teeth. Accordingly, the limitations as to diameter and length of the three portions of the bristle distinguish the invention patentably over the references.

Amended claims 1 and 7 thus are patentable over the references. Since remaining claims 3 and 6 are dependent upon independent claim 1, those claims are also allowable.

In view of the above, allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

This is also to request a three-month extension of time. Enclosed is our check in the required amount of \$930. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees or deficiencies or credits to Deposit Account 07-1900.

Respectfully submitted,
JENSEN & PUNTIGAM, P.S.

By Clark A. Puntigam
Clark A. Puntigam, #25,763
Attorney for Applicant

CAP:gh
206 448-3200
E-mail: clark@jensenpuntigam.com

Enclosures: Check, Postcard